

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-06

SAM-01 OES-03 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 PA-01 PRS-01

SCCT-01 /093 W

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R 170800Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4083

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR

SUBJ: ARAB LEAGUE PETROCHEMICAL CONFERENCE CONVENES IN ABU DHABI

1. SECOND ARAB LEAGUE PETROCHEMICAL CONFERENCE (FIRST ONE HELD IN KUWAIT IN 1971) CONVENED MARCH 15 IN ABU DHABI WITH SOME 300 DELEGATES

LISTENING TO OPENING ADDRESSES BY UAE MIN PETROLEUM MANA AL-OTAIBA, ARAB LEAGUE REP HASSAN RIFAAT AL-DAMANHOURI, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER FOR ARAB STATES REP DR. ABDEL KERIM HELMI AND BY LOCAL PLO REP IBRAHIM AL-ZARD. THEME OF FIRST THREE ADDRESSES WAS PREDICABLY ON NEED TO CONVERT ARAB RAW MATERIAL OIL INTO INDUSTRIAL WEALTH THROUGH PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES. OTAIBA STRESSED, WITH OTHERS

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ECHOING, THAT ARAB STATES MUST COOPERATE IN THIS EFFORT AND CO-

ORDINATE THEIR PLANS (INTERESTING THEORY COMING FROM KEY FIGURE IN THIS COUNTRY WHICH HAS CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN COORDINATING ITS OWN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS).

2. ZARD'S ADDRESS WAS UNSCHEDULED AND APPEARED EMBARRASSMENT TO MANY PRESENT. HIS SPEECH WAS DISJOINTED AFFAIR, CHARACTERIZED MORE BY VOLUME WITH WHICH IT WAS DELIVERED (VIRTUALLY DROWNING OUT SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION) AND BY LENGTH (SOME 25 MINUTES COMPARED TO ADMIRABLY BRIEF 5-7 MINUTES ADDRESSES WHICH HAD PRECEDED). GENERAL THEME WAS THAT ARABS, WHO HAD SHOWN POWER OF OIL AS WEAPON DURING RAMADAN WAR, SHOULD CONTINUE TO USE IT AS WEAPON IN TERMS OF BUILDING ECONOMIC POWER OF ARAB COUNTRIES. AS ONE UAE DELEGATE NOTED TO CHARGE, HOWEVER, KEY PURPOSE OF ZARD'S PARTICIPATION CLEARLY WAS TO ASSERT PLO PRESENCE AND TO GRAB SOME MEDIA ATTENTION.

3. CONFERENCE WILL CONTINUE THROUGH THE WEEK WITH VARIOUS "PLENARY" AND SUB-GROUP MEETINGS CONSIDERING PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS ASSEMBLED FOR OCCASION. WHILE OUR CONTACTS TO DATE HARDLY REFLECT CROSS SECTION OF THOSE ASSEMBLED, FRANK OPINION APPEARS TO BE THAT NOT ALL THAT MUCH TO BE EXPECTED IN WAY OF RESULTS. FOR UAE, HOWEVER, SIMPLY ORGANIZING SUCH A CONFERENCE IN ABU DHABI IS ANOTHER MILESTONE. SIX MONTHS AGO WHILE ANNOUNCING PUBLICLY THAT IT WOULD TAKE PLACE, MIN PETROLEUM OFFICIALS WERE TELLING US PRIVATELY THERE WAS NO WAY THEY COULD HANDLE SUCH AN ASSEMBLY. BUT NOW FOR BETTER OR WORSE IT IS HERE.

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